

Conservation value of the protected area

Mangalavanam Bird Sanctuary

The Mangalavanam has been declared as a bird sanctuary on 31st August 2004. It is the smallest of the protected area in the State, having an area of only 2.74 ha. The Mangalavanam Bird Sanctuary is located between latitudes 9°59'13.4" N and longitudes 76°16'26.1" E in the east of Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) and National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) close to the new building complex of the High Court of Kerala. The Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited campus is in the north and the old Ernakulam Railway Station on the south and east. Mangalavanam consists of a shallow tidal pond guarded by dense growth of mangrove vegetation along the periphery and is connected with Cochin backwaters by a feeder canal. The mangrove serves as a shelter for birds both residents and migratory.

HISTORY

The nearby area of the present day Mangalavanam bird sanctuary was previously used as a timber depot namely Ernakulam timber depot, for stocking the timber through ferry boats. The depot was under the Malayattoor division till 1970 and from 1970 to 1981. It was under the Timber Sales Division, Kalady. From 1981 the area was under the control of Social Forestry Division, Ernakulam. After the declaration of the area as Bird Sanctuary, the management of the sanctuary was done by Wildlife Division, Peechi and from July 2009 onwards the management of the sanctuary is done by Nature Study Centre, Kalady.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MANGALAVANAM

Despite human pressures of various kinds all around, existence of this magnificent unique around, existence of this magnificent unique ecosystem amidst a bustling city like Cochin itself is significant. This estuarial ecosystem provides habitats for various kinds of marine and fresh water organisms and their nursery and feeding grounds. A patch of mangrove ecosystem with large

number of trees which act as “Green lung of Kochi city”. A heaven for large number of wetland birds in the middle of the sprawling city. A piece of serene wilderness at close proximity of city is the ideal place for nature education and eco-tourism for busy urban public.

ECOLOGY, FAUNA AND FLORA

Mangalavanam is a site where migratory avian species visit seasonally. Nesting places for hundreds of avian colonial nesters. Though the extent is comparatively small, a large number of birds and other faunal elements were reported from Mangalavanam Studies conducted in last 10 years revealed a total of 6 species of butterflies, 51 species of spiders. It is a roosting site for thousands of bats.

The Mangalavanam Bird Sanctuary houses around 25 plant species and the vegetation is dominated by mangrove species. Which are *Avicennia officinalis*, *Rhizophora*, *Mucranata*, *Acanthus incifollus*, *Rhizophora* and *Acrostichus aureum* etc..



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